

**SHOPPING BAG HOLDER AND CARRYING APPARATUS**

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**SHOPPING BAG HOLDER AND CARRYING APPARATUS**

## TECHNICAL FIELD

5       The invention relates to a flexible handle bag holder and more particularly to a plastic shopping bag holder.

## BACKGROUND

10       When a person purchases items at a store, one or more shopping bags of some type are used by that person to carry the items home. If the handle is of thin string or even a plastic loop and the items being carried are weighty, the handle can cut into or otherwise severely irritate the fingers of the hand(s) used to carry the bag(s). This irritation may extend to the  
15       sides of the hand or outer fingers as well as to the inside of the hand. When walking on uneven surfaces, while carrying a weighty bag, the shifting weight of the bag can cause stress on the arm of the person carrying the bag as well as sometimes stressing the bag handle to the breaking point. Also, shifting  
20       of the bag(s), while walking on the uneven surfaces is hard to control. If one has multiple bags packed with one or more items and uses a vehicle to traverse part of the distance to a given destination, such as home, the opening at the top of the bags may allow the packed items to disperse from the bags when the  
25       vehicle starts and stops if the handles are not kept in an item retaining position. Further, even if the bag handles are kept in an item retaining position, the bags may still slide or roll in the vehicle carrying space when the vehicle is accelerating or decelerating. Once at the destination and the bags are  
30       unpacked, it may be appropriate to find a place to store commonly used plastic bags, provided by many stores for the customers convenience, for recycling purposes.

There are various bag handle holders on the market such as the one shown in US patent 5,029,926 issued July 9, 1991. However all bag handle holders known to the applicant fail to provide a solution to one or more of the problems  
5 referenced above. Thus it would be desirable to have access to a bag handle holder that provides the capability of solving the problems mentioned supra.

#### SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

10 The present invention comprises a bag handle holder that may be used to improve the quality of life of a person who must carry one or more weighty shopping bags.

#### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

15 For a more complete understanding of the present invention, and its advantages, reference will now be made in the following Detailed Description to the accompanying drawings, in which:

FIGURE 1 is a front view of a bag holder;

FIGURE 2 is a side view of FIGURE 1;

20 FIGURE 3 is a top view of FIGURE 1; and

FIGURE 4 is an isometric view of the bag holder of FIGURE 1 as viewed from above the portion of the holder.

#### DETAILED DESCRIPTION

25 Referring first to FIGURE 1, a generally U-shaped body of a bag holder 100 comprises first and second centrally located bight portions 102 and 104 and legs 106 and 108. Further, an opening 110 is situated between the bight portions 102 and 104 to both lighten the overall weight of the holder 100 and to  
30 allow a limited amount of flexing of the lower bight portion 104. The limited flexing of portion 104 eases the strain on the hand of the person carrying heavy bags goods while using holder

100. A dash line 112 is representative of the base of a trough (better illustrated later in connection with FIGURE 2) into which bag handles are inserted. For now attention is merely drawn to the fact that the trough becomes less deep on the sides of bag holder 100 as it extends to the base of legs 106 and 108.

This trough design (ie widening at the base of the legs) aids in stability of a bag being carried. A dorsum contact or back of wrist contact 114 is attached to the generally U-shaped body of bag holder 100 by extensions designated as 116 and 118.

10 In FIGURE 2, an opening 120 is shown in the extension 116 to lighten the weight of the holder 100. The trough previously mentioned is designated as 122 and has sides or legs designated as 124 and 126. The bight portion of trough 122 is represented by the dash line 112 in FIGURE 1. A hook shaped bag retainer, tab or projection 128 is shown extending from side 124 of trough 122 to nearly the side 126 of trough 122. There is enough space so that a flexible handle of a bag can be compressed, folded, distorted or otherwise manipulated to easily allow the bag handle to be inserted into the trough 122 or removed therefrom and yet prevent the bag handle from readily becoming disengaged from the handle 100. In a preferred embodiment, a second hook, designated as 130 and shown in FIGURE 3 is situated on the other side of the holder 100 near extension 118.

25 It may be noted that the generally U-shaped body of handle 100 is situated transverse to the generally U-shaped trough 122 in the upper and side portions of the holder 100.

In FIGURE 4, it is clear, as previously mentioned in connection with FIGURE 1, that the trough 122 becomes more shallow as it approaches the legs 108. Also in this figure, it may be observed that extension 118 includes an opening (undesigned) similar to opening 120.

To use the holder 100, the flexible handles of one or more

bags to be carried are inserted between the ends of the projections 128 and 130 and the edge 126 of the U-shaped trough 122. The hook shape of the projections acts to minimize the chance of a bag handle accidentally being disengaged from the trough 122. The users hand is then slipped through the opening between the dorsum contact 114 and the side 124 of the trough 122 such that the users fingers contact the lower surface of bight portion 104 between the legs 106 and 108. Thus legs 106 and 108 prevent contact between the bag handle and the user's fingers. With a heavy load in plastic bags and nothing to protect the user's hand, a typical rubbing contact is at least irritating and may cause sores or cuts to appear on the user's hand.

The dorsum contact 114, in contact with the back of the user's wrist helps stabilize the load in the bags being carried.

It should be noted that while there is a space shown between the accidental bag handle removal projection 128 and the side 126 of the trough 122, this space can be reduced to zero if the projection is flexible. Further, the invention includes the option of projections or tabs extending from both sides 124 and 126 wherein the width of the opening between projections is a function of the flexibility of the projections or tabs. As may be noted, the projections need not be curved is they nearly touch another surface but are flexible enough to, under pressure, bend to allow passage of the bag handle.

If a plurality of bags, attached to the handle 100, is placed in a vehicle, the ability of the handle to keep the bags interconnected, helps minimize any rolling or other movement of the combination of bags during sudden starts and stops of the vehicle.

As briefly mentioned previously, the opening 110 not only lightens the weight of the handle 100, but also adds a small

amount of flexibility to the bight portion 104. This flexibility gives some shock absorbing action to less sudden stresses to the hand when carrying packages. However, another function of opening 110, is that it can be used as a place to  
5 store used bags. One or more empty bags can be threaded through opening 104 to be conveniently available at the next use of the handle to carry objects in the bags.

Although the invention has been described with reference to a specific embodiment, the description is not meant  
10 to be construed in a limiting sense. Various modifications of the disclosed embodiment, as well as alternative embodiments of the invention, will become apparent to persons skilled in the art upon reference to the description of the invention. It is therefore contemplated that the claims will cover any such  
15 modifications or embodiments that fall within the true scope and spirit of the invention.